

FAST FASHION

FACTS AND SOLUTIONS



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INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND: WHAT IS FAST FASHION

“Cheaply produced and priced garments that copy the latest catwalk styles and get pumped quickly through stores in order to maximize on current trends” (Eclipse Glove).

Newest, trendiest, and cheapest clothing in a timely manner

- Manufacturing companies are meeting evolving fashion trends
- Clothing goes out of fashion and gets discarded → substantial amount of waste

As will be exemplified in this report, fast fashion leads to **environmental crisis and human health crises!**

We hope to inform you about fast fashion, its negative impacts, and offer potential solutions!

FAST FASHION IN 5 MINUTES

BY NUMBERS



WHAT'S FAST FASHION MEAN?

It refers to big brands who push runway styles to consumers quickly, have a ton of items and are constantly getting new things in and selling them for cheap.



GENERAL FACTS

1.2 - trillion - the worth of the industry
2 - number of fashion seasons in the past
52 - number of fashion seasons today
1700 - dollars spent on clothes/year
103 - items in your closet
20% - items of the 103 you actually wear
7 - times people wear an item of clothing before they toss it.



LABOR

1 in 6 people work in the worldwide garment industry
80% of them are women.
2% of them earn a living wage



ENVIRONMENT

700 gal. of water to make 1 cotton shirt
6 months-80 years - time clothes take to break down in landfills.
10% - The amount the fashion industry produces of emissions worldwide



RESOURCES

True Cost Documentary
Domestic Slavery Quiz
Minimalism Series
Good On You App

for more info: SavvyAF.com

INTRODUCTION

OUR REPORT

We are 6 undergraduate students at the University of California, Berkeley. Emma Barsky, Elida Bryan, Meghan Cruz, Alexis Mullard, Robin Neumann, and Anehit Okojie. This fast fashion report is a part of our final project in our Public Health class: ***Public Health 101 Sustainable World: Challenges and Opportunities***

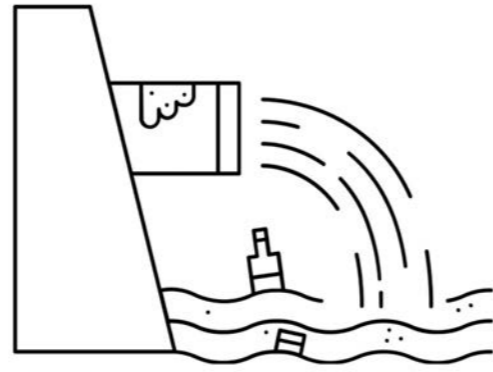
Through this report we hope to continue to shed light on fast fashion. We aim to educate people about the detrimental affects of fast fashion, while strongly emphasizing and focussing on the solutions to this **wicked problem**. This is an issue that can easily be changed and have an immediate positive impact.

We believe in the power of education and information, through which we strongly encourage anyone who reads this report to change their fashion-related behaviors. Further, we aspire for readers to become advocates in whichever way they can.

Through the QR code above, it is easy to continue the dissemination of this report. Our goal is to reach as many people as we can, by spreading our report in and around Berkeley, in order to make a **small impact to this large problem**.

THE IMPACTS OF FAST FASHION:

2ND
POLLUTER



clean water globally

2ND
CONSUMER



of worlds water supply



Every time a synthetic garment is washed

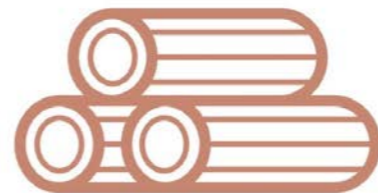
~1900 microfibers are released



ending in the ocean

70 million

trees are cut down every year to make clothing



~750 gallons of water

to produce 1 cotton shirt



the amount 1 person drinks in 2.5 years

THE IMPACTS OF FAST FASHION:

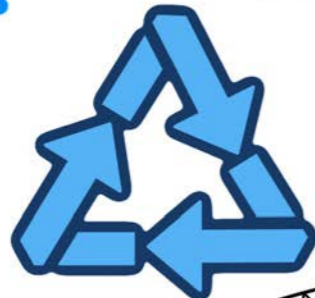
80%
of garment
workers are
women



2%
of them earn
a living wage



**1 garbage truck
of clothes** = **Clothes burned/
dumbed in landfill
every sec**



**85% of all
textiles go to
landfills every
year**

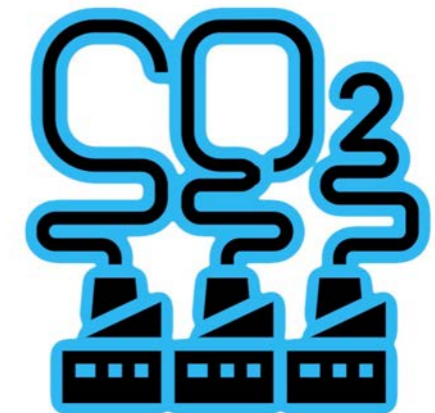


**amount to
annually fill
Sydney harbor**

20%
of industrial
water pollution



is from dyeing/
treating textiles



contributes to 10% of
global GHG emissions

WHAT FAST FASHION LOOKS LIKE ON OUR PLANET



THE IMPACTS OF FAST FASHION

THE COSTS ON THE ENVIRONMENT/ANIMALS

Fast fashion leads to



WATER POLLUTION



WATER CONSUMPTION



MICROFIBERS IN OUR OCEANS



WASTES ACCUMULATION



CHEMICALS ADDICTION



GREENHOUSE GASES EMISSIONS



SOILS DEGRADATION AND DESERTIFICATION



RAINFOREST DESTRUCTION

Water

- Use of fertilizers and dye in the production of cotton is detrimental, as it pollutes both evaporation and runoff waters.
- “In most of the countries in which garments are produced, untreated toxic wastewater from textile factories are dumped directly into the rivers.” directly polluting our waters. (Sustain Your Style)

Deforestation

- Thousands of acres of forest are cut down each year to make way for wood based fabric plantations such as Rayon, viscose, and modal

Waste Accumulation

- *5.2% of waste in landfills are textiles*
- *It takes over 200 years for synthetic fibers, which is in over 70% of clothing, to decompose!*

Carbon Emission

- The synthetic fibers that are used in clothes, such as nylon and polyester, are made from fossil fuels
- Massive amount of carbon emission due to the three-fold production, manufacturing, and transportation of clothes
- Fast fashion emits approx 1.2 billion tons of Co2 each year, becoming responsible for 10% of carbon emissions worldwide

THE IMPACTS OF FAST FASHION

SOCIAL COSTS / HUMAN HEALTH

The toxic and polluted water produced by the fast fashion industry can negatively affect the health of people living on the banks of such rivers. This water contains substances such as lead, mercury, and arsenic which lead to dire health outcomes.

Chemicals

The chemicals that are in our clothes include: acetone, cadmium, carcinogen, dioxins, permethrin, toluene and many more ...

- These chemicals can affect a person just by wearing the clothes
- There is also a huge amount of chemicals used in cotton farming, which has adversely affected the health of cotton farmers

Forced Child Labor and SweatShops

- According to UNDP, it has been reported that factory workers have experienced sexual harassment, low wages, and no union protection
- In fast fashion, supply chains often rely on this kind of labor that puts profits to be gained above the welfare of the people that work for them
- Sweatshops go unnoticed when an aspirational aesthetic is marketed and manipulates consumers

HOW TO SOLVE THE ISSUE

WHAT IS SUSTAINABLE FASHION?

Sustainable shopping : A hopeful industry of ecological integrity in clothing

Sustainable Fashion is clothing products made with a conscious to care about unequal labor conditions and environmental responsibility.

Sustainable fashion has also been named slow Fashion due to its mindful manufacturing, equal labor rights, natural materials and high quality clothing.

Sustainable fashion is environmentally, socially, and economically durable.

Sustainable fashion's link to the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

These examples below are just a few links.



There are huge wealth disparities between the working conditions/ inequalities and the large corporate brands. Slow fashion works on closing this gap.



Be it carbon emissions, water pollution, or waste accumulation. Sustainable fashion makes sure to combat these issues. We must produce clothes that do not harm the environment.



Responsible consumption and production must be acknowledged by producers and consumers. Ending over-production and promoting recycling are key.



Fast fashion production has been outsourced to developing nations. Slow fashion, on the other hand, aims to sustainably emphasize local producers, replacing the fragmented supply chain.

HOW TO SOLVE THE ISSUE

BARRIERS TO SUSTAINABLE FASHION

Why has it not been solved?

Fast fashion is a colossal problem to tackle with so many nuances that make up the complexity of it. It is a global challenge that requires an extensive process and widespread education, however, most individuals remain unaware of the extent of its adverse effects both regarding the environment and human health. Despite increasing negative press and evidence about the consequential nature of fast fashion, it continues to be a success.

- Prioritization is given to the low pricing and ease of the product, over sustainability of the product
- Brands like Zara and H&M have proved to other retailers that they can be successful through this model, encouraging them to keep the chain of fast fashion going.

Sustainable fashion requires a much more thoughtful and extensive process with intricate details, thinking about the affects it has on both the environment and social human health. Although the design process of circular fashion is slower, it does not mean that designers and manufacturers have to increase the price to such extent. It is up to the fashion companies to not overprice their items while keeping transparency and fair practices into consideration.

Societal Issues

- Fast fashion is strongly linked to our capitalistic society; its demands for quick turn around and constant change. This feeds into our modern day desire to constantly buy and have more.
- Consumers have been conditioned to expect a constant stream of new clothes in stores and online
 - Repeating outfits is now seen as taboo → cheap clothes allow consumers to constantly have new outfits
- Social media shows people ads which make it easier for online retailers (many of which are fast fashion) to do well
- Celebrities can help to make luxury items trendy → fast fashion retailers mass produce similar products which allow consumers to dress like their favorite celebrities for a fraction of the price.

HOW TO SOLVE THE ISSUE

OUR CIRCULAR ECONOMY SOLUTION

Due to the wicked nature of this problem, change must happen in an all-around manner impacting the circular economy.

Implementing change in one area *can* make an impact. However, as is shown in the image, when one change builds on to another the greatest result will be achieved, through continued influence.

When looking at the circular economy, officially the government is not directly included in it. However, in this report, our three-tiered circular economy based solution includes **government** as the overarching change maker. Policy and law-making has an overarching affect and therefore influence both manufacturers and consumers.

Regarding the **manufacturer companies**, they have their own circular economy which includes: green products, cleaner production, better service, collect at end-of-life, recycle and reuse.

We then take the circular economy solution approach further with the influential **consumer** part. By both educating and promoting ways to change their behavior we complete the circle.

Only when change happens in all three areas; governmental, production, and consumer will sustainability regarding fashion be reached.



UP NEXT: OUR SOLUTIONS ...

GOVERNMENT POLICIES

A STRONGER APPROACH TO FAST FASHION

One of the most strict and effective ways to regulate the fast fashion industry is for the government to step in and make policies that better ensure ethically, environmentally, socially, and economically-viable processes. It is important to keep in mind that the fast fashion industry is a multibillion dollar money maker so the politics surrounding sourcing, production, distribution, and consumption.

Below are a few policy ideas that the government can potentially implement:

- **Subsidize sustainable materials and fair trade practices** to promote ethics
- **Tax unsustainable materials** that accumulate and harm the environment
- **Set minimum wages** to promote better working environments and livelihoods
- **Require labor standards** in production factories that protect the workers
- **Provide tax cuts** to incentivize biodegradable and recycled packaging
- **Introduce carbon neutral shipping** and increase shipping price for non-neutral
- **Require brand transparency** about the supply chain by 2023 (or another target)
- **Work with the United Nations Alliance for Sustainable Fashion** to achieve SDGs

THE MANUFACTURER APPROACH

CHANGING THE CHAIN OF PRODUCTION

The approach of manufacturers is crucial to the circular economy as they can greatly reduce their environmental footprint.

Sources/Materials

Use materials that are locally sourced to reduce the environmental carbon cost of travel.

Aim to use materials that are recycled materials and/or organically made, moving from synthetic to natural fibers.

Use more quality sources to increase garment life-time

Production process

Use renewable energy for production

Reduce carbon, water, and waste impacts through the usage of Best Available Technologies (BAT)

Packaging process

Reduce amount of packaging, by bulking clothing items one singular wrapping and using recycled materials.

Cost efficient sustainable practices

Promote recycling from consumers through financial incentives

Ex: Take back schemes: \$5 discount on next purchase when older clothes are returned

Practices that increase garment life-time: Offer repair services for a low cost and “up-cycle” clothing

Offer clothing rental services

Reduce overproduction as this can drive up costs if items are left unsold while simultaneously bearing environmental costs.

Aim to achieve sustainable certificates as this promotes the company as a sustainable brand

Ex: Fair Trade Certificate and/or the Certificate to Global Organic Textile Standards

CONSUMERS

EDUCATING CONSUMERS AND CHANGING THEIR BEHAVIOR

With social media becoming more popular, it is becoming easier to educate consumers and advertise the negative effects that Fast Fashion has on the environment. It is important to educate consumers so they can make an ethically conscious choice when buying clothes. It is important to change the consumers behavior in order to start making a change in the industry regarding the damage fast fashion is causing the world.

On becoming more sustainable: continue to educate yourself about the impacts of fast fashion on the environment and human health

Ask yourself, #WhoMadeMyClothes

Taking some time to question and conduct personal research is a great step in the right direction.

Spread this report, to further educate others about the problem of fast fashion!

Go to local government authority and voice your concern / highlight the issue!

Download helpful sustainable apps, *use the power of social media to find local and sustainable brands*

Good on You: Allows you to check how sustainable a certain brand is!

Closetspace: helps you create an overview of the clothes you already own.

Rent the Runway: renting that clothing item you'll only wear once, is much more sustainable!

Poshmark: sell your old clothes, make someone else happy while being sustainable!

CONSUMERS

CHANGING CONSUMERS BEHAVIOR

Tips for a sustainable wardrobe

1. Be on the look out for sustainable materials: organic materials, and nylon, polyester, cotton, and wool
2. When buying an item: ask yourself, will I wear this 30 times or more?
3. Recycle used clothing or up-cycle used clothing
4. Partake in clothing swaps with friends to sustainably and cost-efficiently gain new items
5. Purchase from small and local businesses, in order to avoid the environmental costs of shipping
6. Purchase Made to Order items (MTO)

Places to shop sustainably around Berkeley...

GoodWill

Buffalo Exchange

Crossroads Trading Company

Mars Mercantile

Indigo Vintage Co-op

Amour Vert

UP NEXT: EXAMPLE OF SUSTAINABLE FASHION...

EXAMPLE OF HOW SUSTAINABLE FASHION IS POSSIBLE

My name is Alexis Mullard, and the topic of fast fashion is particularly relatable for me as I have recently been working on starting my own eco-friendly fashion company, and I am majoring in Environmental Design.

The current fashion industry is a linear system, and I hope to reverse this trend by having **circular fashion** as my prime solution. My brand's concept is to practice circular fashion and sustainability in all elements of fashion. I aspire for my company to further establish a **closed-loop** system, in which no product has an end life, and each item will continuously move through a cycle that benefits the environment rather than causing more harm.

My entire process consists of efforts that emphasize **sustainability**, and my primary concern is to avoid contributing more damages to the environment in every way possible. Instead of mass-producing cheap clothing products, I will be implementing **"design on demand"** as my clothing production approach. I have started the "Lucky Star Collection," where I design singular pieces of authentic, trendy clothing to give potential customers options for regular and custom-made orders.

Each packaging, price tag, and clothing tag all consist of eco-friendly, **biodegradable materials**. The clothing itself is manufactured in California and focuses on environmentally-friendly products using very minimal water and energy, producing almost no waste.

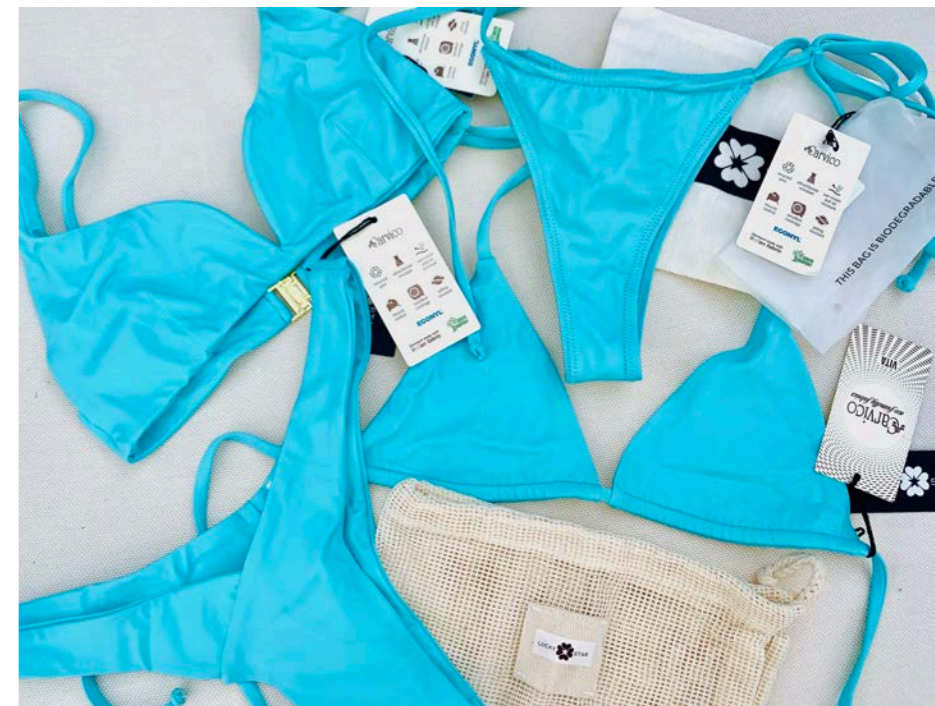
The bathing suits that I have designed are manufactured in Bali. They are eco friendly and made from **recycled ocean plastics**. When a purchase is made of a swimsuit from my company, it contributes to two organizations working towards a sustainable future for Bali's communities:

- The R.O.L.E. Foundation centers around women empowerment and healthy environmental practices.
- Bali WISE helps to develop sustainable communities in Indonesia by empowering women through skills education.

I prioritize brand **transparency**, as each manufacturer I use has healthy working conditions, fair wages, and emphasizes protecting the environment. My primary goals include taking time to design unique clothing pieces at a **reasonable price** while maximizing sustainability in all aspects of the company. I believe that clothing should be created with care, passion, and design because the world would truly benefit if companies considered the environment.

My brand's official name has yet to be released, but here is a preview of my process, and a few items of my upcoming sustainable fashion brand. For example, I can deliver a custom made eco friendly tank for approximately 25\$. Although it takes me much time to produce, this tank has better quality and longevity than any fast fashion item, and is significantly less expensive than most sustainable brands.

EXAMPLE OF HOW SUSTAINABLE FASHION IS POSSIBLE



SOURCES

- <https://www.sustainyourstyle.org/old-environmental-impacts#:~:text=The%20global%20fashion%20industry%20is,millions%20garments%20purchased%20each%20year.&text=%20Cheap%20synthetic%20fibers%20also%20emit,times%20more%20damaging%20than%20CO2>
- <https://sustainability.uq.edu.au/projects/recycling-and-waste-minimisation/fast-fashion-quick-cause-environmental-havoc#:~:text=Fast%20fashion,.to%20maximise%20on%20current%20trends.>
- <https://www.forbes.com/sites/jessicabaron/2019/09/17/apps-to-make-you-an-environment-focused-fashionista-no-matter-what-your-style/?sh=626b542f560d>
- <https://www.worldwildlife.org/stories/the-impact-of-a-cotton-t-shirt#:~:text=It%20takes%20a%20lot%20of,times%20more%20energy%20than%20washing.>
- <http://www.organicclothingalliance.com/Toxic-Chemicals-in-Fast-Fashion.html>
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- <https://remake.world/stories/news/how-the-united-nations-sdgs-relate-to-the-fashion-industry/>
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- <https://www.euronews.com/living/2020/08/17/new-documentary-exposes-subhuman-working-conditions-in-la-sweatshops>
- <https://eclipseglove.com/blogs/stories/clothing-yourself-rethinking-how-much-clothing-you-really-need>
- <https://www.wri.org/blog/2019/01/numbers-economic-social-and-environmental-impacts-fast-fashion>